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Steve Purchase
Assistant Director, Land Management
Navigability Study Request Group
Oregon Department of State Lands
775 Summer St., NE, Suite 100
SALEM, OR 97304

Dear Mr. Purchase,

We received your letter of 5 September, concerning the navigability of the two miles of Three Rivers, from its confluence with the Nestucca River to the Cedar Creek Fish Hatchery.

These two miles of Three Rivers are very important to our family for these reasons: (1) we own a relatively large parcel of land (5+ acres) in "downtown" Hebo which fronts onto Three Rivers, (2) we are members of three (or more!) community organizations which are involved in the development of Hebo along the river, (3) my husband and I are both teachers and we are parents, so we know many of the area children and their recreation patterns, and (4) we use Three Rivers for fishing, wading, swimming, walking along, etc.

I'm going to answer the questions on page 2 of your letter, and then add any other information I think you might need for your determination. I hope this is the simplest way!

(1) Hebo needs this navigability study because the Hebo Community Coalition (formed in 2002, mission statement: "working together to promote community and to enhance the quality of life in Hebo"), the Hebo CPAC (in process of formation - its mission is to provide opportunity for all Hebo residents to be involved in county land use decisions), the Nestucca Valley Family Foundation (mission: "Because we value our kids, our mission is to gather community resources to make a positive impact on their lives"), CARE (Community Action Resources Enterprises, Tillamook, owners of the "CARE Property"), and other community organizations, non-profits and businesses are all planning and working together for big changes in Hebo, many of them along the river. Specifically:

There is a public fishing access park, a partnership between the Forest Service, Tillamook County, the Hebo CC, and the Pacific City-Nestucca Valley Chamber of Commerce, planned on the river just across from the Forest Service building in Hebo. Planning has involved, so far, the county's trading of land to purchase a required piece here along the river.

The CARE property is 19 acres to the west of the Hebo Market and other small stores, and the Hebo sewer facility. This property will eventually contain a

non-profit child care center, a Head Start center, softball and soccer fields, a community center (these last two are projects of the Nestucca Valley Family Foundation), community garden and more! This property is currently heavily used by fishermen and swimmers, and a walking path and streamside restoration (projects of the Nestucca-Neskowin Watershed Council and the local public school's service learning programs) are being built/worked on, also.

The ability of the fishermen and the other users and neighbors of the Hebo fishing park and of the CARE property, to co-exist peacefully in using the property depend upon a clear understanding and adherence to rules of river use.

(2) Everyone involved or interested in the use of Three Rivers in Hebo is encouraged to attend meetings of the above mentioned groups. Talking with neighbors and others at these meetings helps tone down conflicts. However, a navigability study needs to be conducted to make river use legally clear.

(3) We do own several hundred feet of river frontage. Our house, however, sits quite far from the river, so we have experienced few problems up close. At times people have enjoyed the use of folding chairs, a couch, and etc., along the river, and just left these to become eyesores, a very bad view from our side of the river. Little goes on on our property as we are not along a great fishing hole, and our property is a bit inaccessible.

(4) I will ask our 17 year old son to write to you about this - he is our most avid (very avid) fisherman!

For my part, in taking children to wade and swim in the river, I have run up against people telling me to get out of "their" river. I have also had fishermen tell me to leave the area as we were scaring off the fish. (I check fishing reg's and conditions before taking the kids down to swim, so this would be a pretty dim or desperate fisherman.)

Local children of all ages use the rivers around our area to fish, wade, swim, hunt crawdads, hunt for lost lures (a lucrative business!), etc. From their reports, I know they often feel "yelled at".

After writing all this, I think the only other matter that I know of needing to be addressed is the fact that there are conflicting deeds to river ownership along this stretch of Three Rivers. Our property deed says we own to the middle of Three Rivers. Some (all?) of our neighbors across the river from us have deeds saying they own the river bed up to the high water mark on "our" side. There have been no big problems about this, yet. It does seem a potentially tricky situation,

especially as it is probably a common situation along the river.

In conclusion, I hope your agency will proceed with a navigability study. Maybe Hebo and Three Rivers are in a bit of a unique situation - a wonderful salmon-fishing stream running thru a small town, being a major attraction in the town. I hope the navigability study will help all of the river's users - waders, fishermen, boaters, swimmers, neighbors and sight-seers - use the river peacefully.

Yours truly,

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